

**RSM**  
*Times*



**Program Assistants:**  
**The**  
**BACKBONE**  
**of RSM**

**Inside**

**Winter Wonderland Recap**

**MES Diaries - Part II**

# contents

Meet the PAs

5

An Inside Look at the Program Assistants of  
Right from the Start Medicaid

MES Diaries: Part II

12

Career Day at Idlewood Elementary

By Jennifer Ochs

ANNOUNCEMENTS

13

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# Winter Wonderland Recap

Atlanta, – The Right from the Start Medicaid Outreach Project (RSM) sustained one of its largest and celebrated events when it hosted its metro Atlanta Winter Wonderland Health Fair at the Willie Freeman Health Department in College Park. The event brought many smiles to participants, as well as provide information on important health issues.

Health screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, and confidential HIV testing were available.

Parents took advantage of the opportunity to register their children for Medicaid, Peach Care for Kids, and sign up for free identification cards with fingerprints. Right from the Start specialists and local nonprofit organizations were available to answer questions and provide a broad range of other health-related services.

The RSM annual health fair is one of Georgia's Department of Human Resources' (DHR) largest community outreach initiatives.

The holiday event accommodated more than 500 individuals.

"Winter Wonderland 2007 provided a wonderful opportunity for Atlanta area families to get free health screenings, information on the surrounding community, and have fun with their children," said Fulton Medicaid Eligibility Specialist (MES) Evelyn Jean Pittman. "Thanks to the generosity of the many staff volunteers, vendors,

and health department officials for help making this year's holiday health fair a success."

Other organizations joined in to help make the occasion joyful.

The Fulton County Health Department, AID Atlanta, the American Kidney Foundation, Atlanta Diabetes Association, S.A.F.E Kids, Ident-A-Kids, Planned Parenthood of Georgia, ZAP Asthma Consortium, Lead Poison Prevention, Cancer Quest, Mental Health Comprehensive Services, the Georgia Chapter of the Lupus Foundation of America, the Domestic Violence Program, American Heart Association, the Grady Rape Crisis Center, and the Georgia Partnership for Caring Foundation have been long time supporters during the annual event.

"It's great to see all the organizations in one place contributing to health awareness to better inform the community," said local resident Gwen Astin. "I have supported the event the last few years and I am glad to see that it is growing every Christmas holiday"

For the more than 150 children on hand, toys were distributed by age and gender.

Clayton MES Deamphis Williams adorned the red suit and played Santa Claus. Williams portrayed the jolly elf by asking children their Christmas wishes and giving them presents.

"It seems a bit funny at first, putting on the suit. Then you start to see those smiling faces," said Williams. "After the day is over, you know you have made quite a few children happy and have given them a memory that may last a lifetime."







Right from the Start Medicaid Outreach Project

At Risk



# MEET

# the

# PA's

***“The Program Assistant position plays an intricate role in the Right from the Start Medicaid Outreach Project. Their efforts and dedication often imbues staff members. They are devotedly the backbone of the project.”***

***- Ken Duke, Director, Right from the Start Medicaid***

In order for an organization to grow and prosper, there is an unsung employee that makes a difference. One who is reliable as well as talented.

The Program Assistants (PA) of the Right from the Start Medicaid (RSM) Outreach Project have proven to be a valuable asset. While their duties include a variety of clerical operations, they have been acknowledged for their analytical ability.

Their daily clerical assignments have been eclipsed by their proficiency to complete administrative commitments and technological operations.

PA's are known and required to have extensive knowledge of the program, including its procedures and policies. It is common for them to act as the coordinator of a program operation. At times they may supervise other individuals while planning events and establishing various methods of health awareness.

“The program assistant position plays an intricate role in the Right from the Start Medicaid Outreach Project. Their efforts and dedication often imbues staff members,” said RSM Director Ken Duke. “They are devotedly the backbone of the project. Their efforts and ability to multi-task is phenomenal.”

There are 19 program assistants in RSM assigned to specific teams throughout the state.

The position has a slew of veterans. Gwennell Strong, Suzanne Veal, Belinda Douglas, and Gracie Reed have spent more than ten years with the project. Gwinnett Team PA Tina Gazaway began her duties with RSM when it was first established in 1993.

There are five that have spent less than a year including new hire Paulding Team PA Vicki Casto.

“Knowing that I helped someone receive medical insurance, knowing that children are covered if they need health services, those feelings have kept me going all these years,” said Gwinnett Program Assistant Tina Gazaway. “I have seen seven supervisors and I have been privileged enough to work with people that care just as much as I do. With my contributions ranging from grant writing to event coordinating, I know that my efforts exceed my personal gain.”

***“The RSM Program Assistants are seldom recognized for their meaningful contributions to our organization. We value their time and effort devoted in order for Georgia's residents to receive proper health care.”***  
***- Bonnie Taylor, RSM North Manager***



**Name:** Gwenell Strong  
**Team:** State Office  
**Hometown:** Atlanta, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 “Be careful what you ask for.”  
**Year Started With RSM:** 1995  
**Favorite TV Show:** Grey's Anatomy, With Out A Trace, Desperate Housewives, Brothers and Sisters, Ugly Betty, The Biggest Loser, Deal or No Deal  
**Hobbies:** Cooking  
**Family:** Two Children and six Grandchildren  
 “Gwen is doing an extraordinary job! She really knows how to multi task. Gwen seems to have resolutions to problems she may encounter the will prevent her from completing her tasks.”  
 - Judy Adan, RSM Metro Manager

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

The old fashion way, pen, paper, flat pencil and using key adding machine. I would ride horse back to deliver work to other location.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

When we had events for the PA's (Award Lunches, Annual Meetings) so we would get to see each other and meet and greet.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

Before RSM I work for Continental Insurance Company



**Name:** Eva Julia Gonzalez  
**Team:** Arrowhead  
**Hometown:** Puerto Rico  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "With God, all things are possible."  
**Year Started With RSM:** 2006  
**Favorite TV Show:** The King of Queen, Two Men and a Half and One on One  
**Hobbies:** Read Bible  
**Family:** Husband and 3 Children  
 “Eva is the octopus of many arms that keeps the Arrowhead Team together. Without her organizational skills the team could not survive the flood of everyday demands.”  
 - Lorraine Russell, Arrowhead Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

I have all the equipment necessary

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

When I can help others like clients and co-workers

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

Front Desk of Doctor Office



**Name:** Daisy Alvarado  
**Team:** Arrowhead  
**Hometown:** Puerto Rico  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 “With God, All Things Are Possible”  
**Year Started With RSM:** 2007  
**Favorite TV Show:** Deal or No Deal  
**Hobbies:** Decorating  
**Family:** Husband, three children, and two grandchildren  
 “Daisy is the ear wave that transmits and receives all customer concerns and delivers with a job successfully done without any customer complaints.”  
 - Lorraine Russell, Arrowhead Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

I will use a typewriter with carbon copies, and send the letters by mail.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

Thanksgiving Day

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

Nutrition Assistant with Fayette County Board of Education



**Name:** Maria C. Eason  
**Team:** Bibb  
**Hometown:** Eagle Pass, Texas  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 “The good life is inspired by love and guided by knowledge.”  
 - Bertrand Russell  
**Year Started With RSM:** 2007  
**Favorite TV Show:** Friends  
**Hobbies:** Sewing, decorating and shopping for bargains.  
**Family:** Husband George, 39 years; one child, Adam and daughter-in-law , Barbara and two granddaughters, Elizabeth Maria and Victoria Cecilia  
 “She is very efficient, a quick learner and has a very pleasant personality.”  
 - Pamela Alexander, Bibb Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

I would meet and greet customers, take messages, file, and assist the team and supervisor in any way I can.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

Learning how to register cases.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

District interpreter in public health for 13 counties.



***"It is essential for an organization to have people on the frontlines who are talented, dedicated and reliable. The RSM Program Assistants embody these characteristics and they are truly appreciated for their hard work."*** - Judith Adan, RSM Metro



**Name:** Norma Schmidt Todd  
**Team:** Bulloch  
**Hometown:** Springfield, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome."  
 - Booker T Washington.  
**Year Started With RSM:** 2006  
**Favorite TV Show:** Friends  
**Hobbies:** Camping, knitting, sewing and gardening.  
**Family:** Husband Eddie, son, Michael(26), and daughter, Kalyn (17).  
 "Norma provides support for the Eligibility workers by acting as a sounding board when needed and by being a cheerful, supportive friend to all."

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

Short of sending smoke signals and taking a picture of them for a hard copy, I would have to go back to the ways of the dark ages and write or type everything in duplicate and rely on the postal service.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

It has to be the PeachCare Plus cases! I had only been here about five months, It was trying and demanding, it gave me great practice in registering cases, fielding phone calls, and answering questions.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

I was part owner of an industrial insulation company for 10 years.



**Name:** E. Marie Tatum  
**Team:** Clarke  
**Hometown:** Commerce, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 Do your best for your customer.  
**Year Started With RSM:** 2007  
**Favorite TV Show:** House  
**Hobbies:** Cross stitching, fishing, spending time with family  
**Family:** Husband, two children, three grandchildren, English Bulldog "Georgia"  
 "Marie provides great customer service, whether it is by phone or in person."  
 - Vanessa Pace, Clarke Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

I would use carbon paper, letters, and US postal service

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

None, newly employed.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

I worked for Revenue Maximization.



**Name:** Linda Allen Keaton  
**Team:** Carroll  
**Hometown:** Buchanan, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "Greater is he that is in me than he that is in the world."  
**Year Started With RSM:** 2002  
**Favorite TV Show:** Law & Order  
**Hobbies:** Love of Music and Travel  
**Family:** Husband, three children, four grandchildren and expecting fifth in 2008.  
 "She is a kind-hearted, compassionate and caring person who strives to do an excellent job, and provides unwavering support for her teammates and supervisor. We are very fortunate to have her."  
 - Melissa Wade, Carroll Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

I can't imagine!

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

Linda could not come up with one, but I could. One of my most memorable moments When I witnessed her ability to keep her team going in the midst of crisis (Hurricane Katrina and 4 shelters in our own team area), and to run the office while staff worked at the shelters, and she fielded questions for customers while staff were at the shelters. - Melissa Wade, Carroll Team Supervisor

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

I was an Executive Secretary with a manufacturing facility for 33 years.



**Name:** Claudia Johanna Ortega  
**Team:** Clayton  
**Hometown:** Elizabeth, New Jersey  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "Don't wait until everything is perfect before you decide to enjoy your life. Learn to be content where you are, while you are on your way to where you are going." - Joyce Meyer.  
**Year Started With RSM:** 2007  
**Favorite TV Show:** Intervention  
**Hobbies:** I collect Precious Moments.  
**Family:** The Ortega Tribe is made up of my loving husband JC, my daughter Daniela, and my two boys Zack & Jake.  
 "I have never met anyone with as much initiative and as much willingness to take on more responsibility as Claudia."  
 - Donald Jenkins, Clayton Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

Well light up some sticks and get ready for some smoke signals. The same as always, with a smiling face. I don't think it's the amount of tasks that you get that determines your performance, it's the attitude that you take to the task. It's part of your job, like I always say "Bring it on!"

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

As a PA it is memorable when I can help a client from start to finish with there case.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

I was the office administrator for a Century 21.



***"With the amount of work that occurs throughout the year, the RSM Program Assistants have done an excellent job assisting the staff. We are delighted to have such an emphatic group associated with Right from the Start Medicaid."***

***- Mandy Corlee, RSM Middle Manger***



**Full Name:** Tressa Curry  
**Team:** Dekalb  
**Hometown:** Atlanta, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "Understand my past, respect my present, and envy my future."  
**Year Started With RSM:** 2006  
**Favorite TV Show:** Law and Order SVU and CI  
**Hobbies:** Singing, Reading and Writing  
**Family:** I have three children. Imani (6), Yasmine (5) and Devyn (3)  
 "Tressa has a knack for providing superior customer service. Visitors and callers know when they talk to her that she cares about them because they can hear it in her voice. She always has a smile in her voice and a song in her heart."  
 - Gary Simms, Dekalb Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

I would write it out manually and research through books to find information to help the client.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

My most memorable moment was when I was hired. I'm just glad that it worked out. The work I did up at the state office spoke on my behalf, and that there were people around me looking out for me. For that I will always be grateful.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

I was a student at Atlanta Tech. College for LPN



**Full Name:** Sonja Chambers Ruis  
**Team:** Dougherty, Georgia  
**Hometown:** Moultrie, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "Always do your best."  
**Year Started with RSM:** 2007  
**Favorite TV Show:** CSI  
**Hobbies:** Playing the piano  
**Family:** Husband, Kelvin; Daughter, Alexis  
 "Sonja...organized, professional, always on time, never misses a deadline, excellent customer service skills, works well independently and she is just a kind person and fun to be around."  
 - Nancy Kudela, Dougherty Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

We rely so much on technology that I have to give this a little thought. I would have to go to other offices to make copies. I'm sure that without these items readily available, I would have to play catch up.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

The Dougherty RSM Team had received the PeachCare Plus cases. I was impressed at the demonstration, everyone managed to complete this large task.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

I was employed with Colquitt County Board of Education.



**Name:** Cynthia Diane Wyatt  
**Team:** Fulton  
**Hometown:** Atlanta, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "There are three answers to Prayer: 1. Yes! 2. Not yet! 3. I have something better in mind."  
**Year Started With RSM:** 1999  
**Favorite TV Show:** CSI  
**Hobbies:** Singing, Art  
**Family:** Three Children; Three Grandchildren  
 "Cynthia is the sugar and cream in our coffee."  
 - Marcus Magee, Fulton Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

Carrier Pigeon and Pony Express

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

Secretary's Day!

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

Administrative Assist for West End Medical Center



**Name:** Tina Marie Gazaway  
**Team:** Gwinnett  
**Hometown:** South Bend, Indiana  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "God is good all the time, and all the time God is good!"  
**Year Started With RSM:** 1993  
**Favorite TV Show:** Heroes  
**Hobbies:** Gardening, reading, fishing, hiking (anything outdoors)  
**Family:** Newly married in November of last year, has two sons. I currently have five grandchildren with one on the way!  
 "Tina is very professional, dedicated, compassionate and open minded. She is a person you want to have not only as a coworker, but as a friend."  
 - Nelli Vergillis, Gwinnett Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

Actually, when I began with RSM there were no computers. I had to go to the DFCS office and wait (or beg) to use someone's office to key cases which were on PARIS at that time.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

In 2000 winning the Secretary of the Year award that I could not be present for but my team called me to let me know about it. I was able to whisper that honor to my father before he died and I felt so good about it.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

I was a paralegal for a law firm.



***"It is appealing to have individuals who are committed to an engrossed position. We would not function effectively without their assistance. We are truly pleased to have Program Assistants."***  
**- Wesley Merritt, RSM South Manager**



**Name:** Suzanne Brantley Veal  
**Team:** Laurens  
**Hometown:** Wrightsville, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me." Phil. 4:13  
**Year Started with RSM:** 1997  
**Favorite TV Show:** Court TV  
**Hobbies:** Reading and spending time with my family  
**Family:** My husband, 46 years. We have a daughter, son, four grandchildren, and three great-grandsons. We have a little girl that we call our adopted grandchild. She is not legally ours, but we claim her anyway.  
 "Suzanne has been promoted to MES. As a PA, she has done an excellent job."  
 - Ken Duke, RSM Director

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

In my first office job I did not have a computer, fax or copier. The only thing I had was a telephone. Carbon paper and the U.S. Mail were utilized a lot.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

During the testing for the PA position, I was asked to use an old manual typewriter for the typing portion. I was so accustomed to using a computer that I had almost forgotten how to set the margins and tabs on the typewriter.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

I worked 26 years for a company that manufactured men's and boy's underwear. My job title was Benefits Administrator. I was in charge of Insurance, Retirement, and Safety Ops.



**Name:** Gracie Reed  
**Team:** Muscogee  
**Hometown:** Columbus, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 That changes with the time...  
**Year Started With RSM:** 1994  
**Favorite TV Show:** Law and Order and Without A Trace  
**Hobbies:** Reading, Cooking, Sewing  
**Family:** Two children, daughter (18), son (20).  
 "If you need a strong example of a dedicated, loyal, dependable and conscientious employee, Gracie Reed fits the bill."  
 - Donna Miller, Muscogee Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

The old way, with pencils, pens, carbon paper, envelopes and stamps.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

I am still waiting for that one...

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

AFLAC Insurance Company Policy Holder Service Department.



**Name:** Belinda A. H. Douglas  
**Team:** Lowndes  
**Hometown:** Fitzgerald, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:** "Happiness is a Journey, Not a Destination."  
**Year Started with RSM:** 1995  
**Favorite TV Show:** CSI - Las Vegas  
**Hobbies:** Cooking, Sewing, Spending time with my family and great nephew  
**Family:** Husband - Leon, Children - Leon II and Brandon  
 When I think of Belinda's work ethic I can't help but quote Douglas Adams, "To give real service you must add something which can not be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity."  
 - Carrie Thompson, Lowndes Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

The old fashion way, everything hand written with carbon paper and the postal service.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

Meeting Michael Thurmond.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

Secretary for Board of County Commissioners of Ben Hill County



**Name:** Earlette Shipes  
**Team:** Screven RSM  
**Hometown:** Sylvania, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "Stop and Smell the Roses"  
**Year Started With RSM:** 2000  
**Favorite TV Show:** CSI  
**Hobbies:** Horses  
**Family:** Husband and four Children  
 "Earlette is a very, very hard worker. Often is the time I force her out the door when 4:30PM rolls around. She does her best on any job given to her, never makes excuses, and is always on time."  
 - Don Love, Screven Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

Would have a two month back log!

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

Named 2005 RSM Veteran of the Year.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

Insurance Clerk for Effingham Co Hospital



***"If one piece of a puzzle is missing, it is considered incomplete. Right from the Start Medicaid would not be intact without Program Assistants. They are highly appreciated for their consistency and analytic skill."***  
***- Eugene Vas, RSM Office Manager***



**Name:** Melissa Ann Greaves  
**Team:** Ware  
**Hometown:** Waycross, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "Be careful what you wish for, it just may come true."  
**Year Started with RSM:** 2006  
**Favorite TV Show:** I like any reality shows, they make my life seem so much more normal.  
**Hobbies:** Shopping, dancing, traveling, and spending time with my husband and children.  
**Family:** Husband, Damion and three children, Destiny(10), Caitlyn(9), & Danielle(2).  
 "Melissa is a wonderful asset to the team. She completes her assignments on time and frequently offers to help other team members."  
 - Paula Bennett, Ware Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

I really have no idea.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

Still new, so all moments are memorable.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

I was the office manager at Harvey's Supermarket in Waycross, GA.



**Name:** Betty Holmes Jones  
**Team:** Washington  
**Hometown:** Sandersville, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "Bless 'em, Lord"  
**Year Started with RSM:** 2002  
**Favorite TV Show:** : Fox News and Home and Garden Show  
**Hobbies:** Gardening, and Reading  
**Family:** Husband, Melton (a county commissioner) and two daughters, Sharon and Dianna, and two grandchildren.  
 "Betty is a real team player. If you were to look up *team player* in the dictionary, her photo would be there beside it!"  
 - Brant Kennedy, Washington Team

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

Slowly, I'm sure. The old stand by methods: carbon paper, log books, forms, and snail mail.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

My work experience as a whole is memorable because of such pleasant working conditions at the office with my co-workers. I did enjoy my supervisor recognizing me with a Certificate of Achievement for Exceptional teamwork at our unit meeting.

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

Part time financial secretary of First Baptist Church in Sandersville, Ga.



**Name:** Linda Maguire Chalkiadi  
**Team:** Whitfield  
**Hometown:** Mineral Bluff, Georgia  
**Favorite Quote:**  
 "No you have, Yes you can get"  
**Year Started with RSM:** 2002  
**Favorite TV Show:** Lost  
**Hobbies:** Working on my house, my dog, going to the movies, and working on the computer.  
**Family:** Eric Chalkiadi, Spouse, Jake my dog a rat terrier.  
 "Her dependability, her articulate nature, her attention to detail, and her organization skills all contribute to her intangible value."  
 - Barbara Thomas, Whitfield Team Supervisor

**If there were no copiers, computers, fax machines or phones; how would you perform your daily tasks?**

The old school way, by snail mail.

**What is your most memorable moment as a PA?**

Winning the 2004 Rookie of the Year Award

**What job did you hold before working with RSM?**

Payroll Accounts Payable Accounts Receivable for Blue Ridge Textile





# RSM:



**Atlanta** – Even with traditional outreach increasing throughout the year, RSM has strengthened its efforts to reinforce the importance of having medical insurance and the steps needed to obtain services.

Atlanta Hispanic radio stations, WWVA – VIVA 105.7FM and WBZY – El Patrón 105.3, simultaneously broadcasted a pre-recorded interview with Right from the Start Medicaid (RSM) eligibility specialist Sandra Ibarra-Aleman on Sunday, January 27<sup>th</sup>. The radiocast was also streamed across the world-wide-web via the stations' web-site, [www.elpatron1053.com](http://www.elpatron1053.com) and [www.viva1057.com](http://www.viva1057.com).

Ibarra-Aleman, a member of the Gwinnett County RSM team, was invited to discuss the critical factors involved in the Medicaid application process on the radio show *Contacto Directo* (Direct Contact).

*Contacto Directo*, hosted by Ricardo Córdova, is a morning show which focuses on issues impacting metro Atlanta's Hispanic communities. Córdova has more than ten years of radio broadcast experience. He has been recognized in El Salvador, California and is now one of Atlanta's respected radio personalities.

Atlanta's Hispanic radio listeners make up 12 percent of more than 3 million of the radio metro population. Affectionately known as the voice of Atlanta's Hispanic Community, VIVA 105.7FM is Atlanta's only full-power, full-coverage Hispanic adult contemporary radio station. VIVA reaches all of Atlanta's Hispanic population – Central American, South American and Caribbean.

Ibarra-Aleman, also informed listeners of upcoming outreach events and the importance of Medicaid awareness.

"We are increasing our campaign efforts to boost awareness. We felt it was important to use this facet of communication to reach the Hispanic residents," said Ibarra-Aleman. "A significant number of Medicaid applicants are of Latino decent, so it was extremely imperative to take advantage of the opportunity. With the air time, we have answered some of our frequently asked questions in regards to obtaining free or low income medical insurance."

Both stations serve 70 percent of Atlanta's Hispanic market and also partner with businesses, broadcast live at local events, including: fairs, clubs, concerts and festivals. The station's signal covers all of Metro Atlanta and reaches as far as Cherokee, Gilmer, Gordon, Troup, and Muscogee Counties.

"This was a great way for us to reach the Hispanic population," said RSM Gwinnett Team Supervisor Nelli Vergilis. "We want to make sure that they are aware of Right from the Start Medicaid's purpose and other service providers that may be of assistance in obtaining health insurance."



Gwinnett Team MES, Sandra Ibarra-Aleman, answers important questions regarding the Medicaid application process from radio personality Ricardo Córdova on the weekend morning show, *Contacto Directo* (Direct Contact).



# MES Diaries Part II By Jennifer Ochs



At that point,  
many of the  
children started  
saying "I have  
Medicaid  
, I have  
PeachCare!"

## Career Day at Idlewood Elementary

Beep! Beep! Beep! My alarm clock rang out loud and clear, it was time to get up. I sat up in bed and awoke to the realization that today was a big day. Today was Friday, December 14, 2007 and I was supposed to meet and talk with the students from Dekalb County Schools' Idlewood Elementary School for their long awaited Career Day. After getting ready for work, I went to the office and gathered all of my outreach supplies, goodies and papers. I then headed over to the school.

I was greeted by Dr. Lucear one of the caring counselors who signed me in and gave me a brief summary on how my day would go. She said, "You are going to be with all the Kindergarten classes today! Is that okay?" I thought for a moment about the message I would deliver. However, I was ready no matter what grade! I was going to go into four different classrooms and talk to a total of nine classes. During my classroom rotations I was to see a total of approximately 170 children who were 5-6 years old. Can you imagine standing alone in front of children, telling them why your career is fun and entertaining them all at the same time? I have to say, I felt like this was the opportunity to encourage and educate.

As a parent, I know that sometimes children bring important things to your attention that you have just simply overlooked. I wanted to make sure that my reason for talking to them was clear. I wanted to get three simple points across to the children such as: stay in school, working can be rewarding, and emphasizing the importance of being a Medicaid eligibility specialist.

I never underestimated my prowess to relate to children no matter the age. I was armed and ready to talk about how exciting it is to work with the RSM Project. Early in the morning these children were eager to hear what I had to say. They were sitting attentively with their eyes wide open and their mouths shut. With prizes sitting in front of them, they quietly listened and anticipated the fun activities that I had ready for them.

I introduced myself and explained in detail the mission of the RSM Project. Many of the children shouted "I have Medicaid, I have PeachCare!" After acknowledging all the excitement within these children, I told them information they had never heard before. The teachers and children learned about our classes of assistance programs which included: F15, F22, P01, LIM, WHM, EMA, and GPC as well as our close ties with PCK. At the end of the career education session they had a chance to ask questions and a chance to participate in activities.

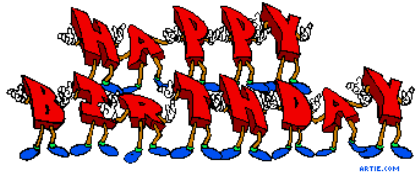
I bet you are wondering what kind of activities could possibly help them understand, love, and respect what we do within the RSM Project. Well, I thought about it myself for a long time, when I prepared an awareness education plan for the children.

I came to the conclusion that word searches and prizes for answering questions was the best way. They received various prizes depending on the difficulty of the question. There were stickers, pencils, rulers, vitamin boxes and balloon animals. There were two children who answered a number of questions correctly and they received little PCK organizers. I started out with easy questions, "What is my name?" Gradually, I moved to the harder questions like "Who do we help?" and "Where can you find us?" It was a delight to see such excitement run through children.

As I was departed from each group, the children thanked me for coming and assured me they were going to share everything they learned. They enjoyed all their prizes and looked forward to the word searches I left behind. It was so fulfilling to see these young aspiring children who want to have careers in fields where they can help others.

Before leaving the school I stopped in with the counselors to submit my survey highlighting my experience with the schools annual career day. I talked with them and left them information packets, pamphlets, and a few other items for them to enjoy as well. They in return gave me a simple gift of appreciation, a school sports bottle and a bag of popcorn that said "We think you are saporific!"





03/01	CRUZ, NORMA	GWINNETT
03/02	DOUGLAS, BELINDA	LOWNDES
03/03	DEAVER, KAREN	WHITFIELD
03/08	MORALES, ALBA	CLAYTON
03/10	GONZALEZ, EVA	ARROWHEAD
03/11	MERRITT, JAMES	STATE OFFICE
03/11	CARR, AMY	DOUGHERTY
03/13	DYE, AUDREY	DEKALB
03/14	BYRD, KIMYA	GWINNETT
03/15	SURLES, BEVERLY	ECS
03/17	HIGHTOWER, BARBARA	FULTON
03/20	FRANK, MOLLY	CARROLL
03/21	MILLER, GINA	DOUGHERTY
03/25	BARRON, DERRICK	CARROLL
03/25	ORTEGA, CLAUDIA	CLAYTON
04/02	GREAVES, MELISSA A.	WARE
04/07	PETERSON, CAROLYN	SCREVEN
04/07	ACOSTA, DAMARIS	ARROWHEAD
04/07	ROWELL, STEVEN	CARROLL
04/08	HART, LISA M	BIBB
04/11	CARROLL, DARLA	BIBB
04/12	ZELLNER-DARDEN, MICHELLE	BIBB
04/18	SMITH, WANDA Y.	CARROLL
04/19	ADAN, JUDITH	STATE OFFICE

04/19	ADAN, JUDITH	STATE OFFICE
04/20	TATUM, EDITH M.	CLARKE
04/25	ANDERSON, NATASHA	FULTON
04/29	STRONG, GWENNELL	STATE OFFICE
04/30	WRIGHT, DONICE	LAURENS
04/30	CHALKIADI, LINDA	WHITFIELD
05/04	WILLIAMS, DEAMPHIS	CLAYTON
05/04	VAS, EUGENIO	STATE OFFICE
05/06	RAGLAND, ROBIN	PAULDING
05/07	TAUNTON, JONI	BIBB
05/07	PACE, VANESSA S.	CLARKE
05/07	JONES, BETTY	WASHINGTON
05/12	WALKER, TIMOTHY	BIBB



### **Congratulations Karen Bryant and Family**



Whitfield - RSM would like to extend a heartfelt congratulations to Whitfield Team MES, Karen Bryant and her family.

Karen gave birth to Stran Colton Bryant on January 13th at 1:20 P.M. He weighed 7 lbs, one ounce and his length was 19 inches.



# RSM : IN T R A I N I N G

Macon - Recently hired RSM Medicaid eligibility specialists (MES) convened in Macon to participate in a week long training session to help prepare them for their daily assignments.

The group consisted of ten specialists, Michelle Black, Ware Team; Alisha Staton, Dekalb; Debra Thompson, Dekalb Team; Lillie Canidate, Dekalb Team; Grace Hillyard, Screven Team; Molly Frank, Carroll Team; Angela Leggett, Laurens Team; Suzanne Veal, Laurens Team; Sandra Ibarra-Aleman, Gwinnett Team; and Magdalena Murray, Bulloch Team.

Among the trainees were employees who were promoted to the position, a rehire, and a few with experience on the state level.

Suzanne Veal started as a program assistant for the Laurens Team in 1997. Veal has recently been promoted to Medicaid eligibility specialist and has already began her duties as an MES.

Returning to RSM is Dekalb Team MES Debra Thompson. Thompson was one of the first RSM employees when the project was established in 1993. She attended the training that year and was assigned to the Dekalb Team where she worked until 2000.

Ware Team MES Michelle Black joins the RSM staff with extensive health service experience. Black was an eligibility specialist for 11 years for the Health and Human Services Commission in Texas.

RSM trainer, Jamie Anderson, prepped the group on the application process and steps to determine eligibility.

"It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to be an MES," said Anderson. "We established the training so RSM ensures that the MES is confident in preparing Medicaid cases."



Newly appointed MES Suzanne Veal



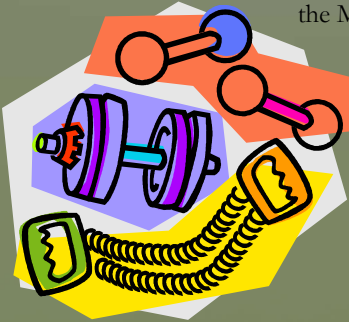
Debra Thompson worked for RSM during its early years.



RSM Trainer, Jamie Anderson goes over the exercises during training.



New RSM hires gathered for a week long training session. The training took place in Macon and covered the Medicaid application process.



## RSM Assists ACLA in Annual Community Health Fair



(From l - r) Specialists, Isabel Rodriguez, Grace Skipper and Karen Bryant pause for a pose at the ACLA 8th Annual Community Health Fair.

Dalton - The Right from the Start Medicaid Project's Whitfield Team were invited to participate in the Alianza Comunitaria Latino-Americana's (ACLA) 8th Annual Community Health Fair. The fair was held in Dalton, Georgia at North-west Georgia Trade and Convention Center.

The Alianza Comunitaria Latino-Americana, translated the Latin-America Community Alliance, invite more than 80 exhibitors such as: health care institutions, pharmaceutical companies, community agencies, various businesses and local health care providers every year. Nearly 2,300 people are served official health services. Patrons can receive check-ups for diabetes, hypertension and pre-cancerous conditions.

The RSM Whitfield Team provided information on free and low income Medicaid.

"We consider this event one of the largest community health fairs in the Whitfield and Murray County area," said Bonnie Taylor, RSM North Manager.